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GOP states targeting diversity, equity efforts in higher ed

Associated Press
Frustrated by college diversity initiatives he says are "fomenting radical and toxic divisions," Texas state Rep. Carl Tepper set out to put an end to diversity, equity and inclusion offices in higher education. The freshman Republican lawmaker filed a bill to ban such offices. Three months later, he filed a new version of the legislation doing the same thing. The difference? Tepper switched the wording to align with a new model bill developed by the Manhattan Institute and Goldwater Institute, a pair of conservative think tanks based in New York and Arizona, respectively. Republican lawmakers in at least a dozen states have proposed more than 30 bills this year targeting diversity, equity and inclusion efforts in higher education, an Associated Press analysis found using the bill-tracking software Plural.



Missouri state Rep. Doug Richey speaks about his budget amendments prohibiting spending on diversity, equity and inclusion efforts during a Missouri House debate at the state Capitol in Jefferson City, Mo., on March 30, 2023.

Associated Press

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GOP states targeting diversity, equity efforts in higher ed

Continued from Front

The measures have become the latest flashpoint in a cultural battle involving race, ethnicity and gender that has been amplified by prominent Republicans, including former President Donald Trump and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, potential rivals for the GOP presidential nomination in 2024. Many of the proposals root in one of a half-dozen conservative or libertarian organizations offering recommendations for limiting consideration of diversity, equity and inclusion in employment decisions, training and student admissions. Some measures mirror the model bills nearly exactly. Others copy key definitions or phrases while adapting the concepts to their particular states.

"There's a tremendous appetite on the right to deal with this issue," said Joe Cohn, legislative and policy director for the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression, which in February added its own model bill to the swelling ranks of proposals.

The bills are an outgrowth of recent Republican attempts to limit critical race theory, a viewpoint that racism is historically systemic in the nation's institutions and continues today to maintain the dominance of white people in



Students from the University of Missouri School of Medicine pose for a group photo in a Senate committee room in the Missouri Capitol in Jefferson City, Mo., after testifying against legislation on March 28, 2023.

society. Christopher Rufo, who now is a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute, helped propel conservative outrage in 2020 against what he has described as critical-race-theory concepts infiltrating governments and educational institutions.

Trump responded by issuing an order in September 2020 banning training involving "divisive concepts" about race for government employees and contractors. Similar wording began cropping up in state-level legislation the following year.

Florida's so-called "Stop

WOKE" law, which DeSantis signed last year, is among the most prominent measures. It bars businesses, colleges and K-12 schools from giving training on certain racial concepts, such as the theory that people of a particular race are inherently racist, privileged or oppressed. Courts have currently blocked the law's enforcement in colleges, universities and businesses. DeSantis has continued to press the issue. He proposed legislation this year to ban diversity, equity and inclusion offices as part of a broader agenda to reshape higher educa-

tion. He also appointed Rufo and other conservatives to the New College of Florida's oversight board, which then abolished the liberal arts college's office that handles diversity, equity and inclusion programs. "DeSantis has been so vocal about the changes he wants to make in universities that it has probably spurred activity in other states," said Jenna Robinson, president of the James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal, a conservative nonprofit based in Raleigh, North Carolina. On their face, diversity, equity and inclusion may

seem uncontroversial. Higher education institutions, along with many businesses, have devoted resources to inclusivity for years.

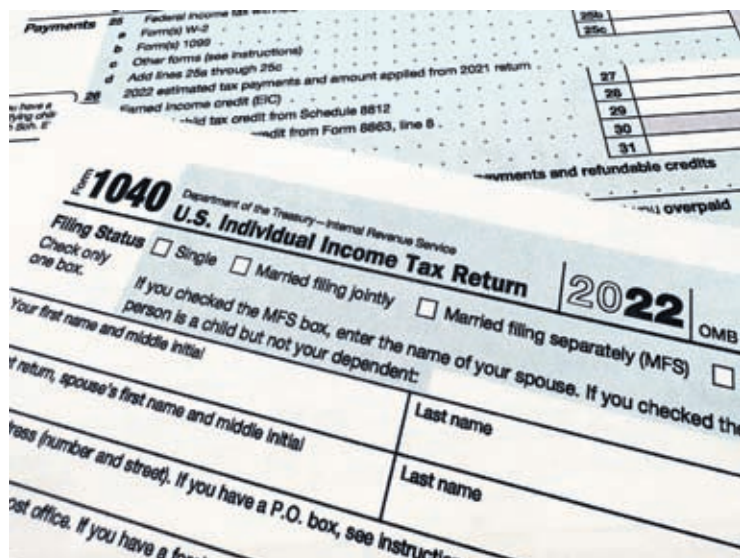
"DEI is woven into the fabric of good universities," said Karma Chavez, chair of the Department of Mexican American and Latina/o Studies and co-chair of the College of Liberal Arts diversity committee at the University of Texas.

Campus DEI offices often spearhead services tailored to students of various races, genders, sexual orientations, cultures and abilities. Some college administrators also consider diversity and equity when admitting students, providing scholarships or deciding which faculty to hire and promote. Applicants may be asked not only for resumes and references, but also for statements about how they would advance DEI efforts.

During a recent Missouri House debate, Republican Rep. Doug Richey put forth a series of budget amendments prohibiting state funding for DEI initiatives in government agencies and higher education. He asserted the offices espouse "racist policies" and "Marxist ideology that is trying to strip away from us the concepts of the nuclear family, of merit, of character and of being judged by what you are capable of." □

Associated Press

Calling the IRS? Hold times are way down this tax season



The Internal Revenue Service 1040 tax form for 2022 is photographed, Monday, April 17, 2023.

Associated Press

By FATIMA HUSSEIN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Taxpayers who called the IRS had an average wait time of four minutes this tax season compared to 27 minutes a year earlier, the agency said Monday. Ahead of the tax filing deadline on Tuesday, the IRS is promoting its improved customer service and giving credit to a big boost in funding provided by the Inflation Reduction Act that Democrats pushed through Congress last year.

The federal tax collector on Monday reported a

dramatic turnaround for the 2023 tax season from a year ago, when the agency scored its worst customer service marks on record. IRS employees this tax season have answered 2 million more calls, and served 100,000 more taxpayers in-person, it reported. The agency also digitized 80 times more paper forms than in 2022 and cleared the backlog of unprocessed 2022 individual tax returns. New IRS Commissioner Daniel Werfel, sworn in earlier this month, promised that to use the new \$80 billion infusion of cash

over the next 10 years to help the federal tax collector become faster, more tech-savvy and provide "real-world improvements" to taxpayers.

"We're trying to improve services dramatically," said Wally Adeyemo, Treasury's deputy secretary at an Urban Institute event on Monday. At the same event, former IRS Commissioner Charles Rossotti was more critical of the IRS spending plan. "There's an under allocation for technology," he said. "They need to spend a lot more time on a compliance strategy." □

GOP leader McConnell returns to Senate after head injury

By MARY CLARE JALONICK

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell is back at work in the U.S. Capitol on Monday, almost six weeks after a fall at a Washington-area hotel and extended treatment for a concussion. The longtime Kentucky senator, 81, has been recovering at home since he was released from a rehabilitation facility March 25. He fell after attending an event earlier that month, injuring his head and fracturing a rib.

McConnell arrived at the Capitol early Monday and is expected to work a full schedule in the Senate this week. In brief remarks on the Senate floor as the chamber came back into session after a two-week recess, McConnell criticized President Joe Biden for not doing enough to negotiate on the nation's debt ceiling and thanked his colleagues for their well-wishes.

"I'm very happy to be back," McConnell said. "There's important business for Congress to tackle." And he joked, "Suffice it to say, this wasn't the first time



Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., returns to the chamber almost six weeks after a fall that left him with a rib fracture and concussion, at the Capitol in Washington, Monday, April 17, 2023.

that being hard-headed has served me very well." McConnell returns to the Senate ahead of a busy stretch in which Congress will have to find a way to raise the debt ceiling and negotiate additional aid for the Ukraine war, among other policy matters. And he comes back as several other senators have been out for medical

reasons, raising questions about how much the Senate will be able to achieve in the coming months with a 51-49 split between the parties.

Already, the GOP leader's absence, along with those of Democratic Sens. Dianne Feinstein and John Fetterman, among others, have added to the Senate's lethargic pace in the

first few months of the year. Unlike the last two years, in which Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer was able to push through key elements of President Joe Biden's agenda with the help of a Democratic-led House, the Senate has been significantly slowed with Republicans now in charge in the House. And absences have made

even simple votes like nominations more difficult.

One immediate question for McConnell upon his return is whether to help Democrats temporarily replace Feinstein on the Senate Judiciary Committee as she continues to recover in California from a case of the shingles.

Democrats have become increasingly frustrated as the Democrat's more than six-week absence on the panel has stalled confirmation of some of Biden's nominees, and Feinstein has asked for a short-term substitute on the committee.

Democrats can't do that, though, without help from Republicans, since approval of the process would take 60 votes on the Senate floor. Two GOP members of the Judiciary panel, Sens. Tom Cotton of Arkansas and Marsha Blackburn of Tennessee, have already said they don't believe that Republicans should help Democrats replace Feinstein.

It is unclear when Feinstein, 89, will return to Washington. Her office has so far declined to say. □

Associated Press

U.S., Japan plant White House cherry tree to mark friendship

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Stepping gingerly over the lawn in their spiky heels, first lady Jill Biden and Yuko Kishida, the wife of Japan's prime minister, planted a cherry tree at the White House on Monday to honor decades of friendship between their countries.

"This is how you always plant a tree," Biden said, laughing about their shoes as she and Kishida shoveled soil around the base of a Yoshino cherry tree sapling on the south grounds.

Kishida is on a rare solo visit to the United States. It's the first time the spouse of the prime minister has traveled alone to the United States, and Kishida visited at Biden's invitation, according to the Japanese embassy in Washington.

She is spending part of the week in Washington to promote friendship between the U.S. and Japan, as well as cultural exchanges, the Japanese government said.

Biden took Kishida to the Oval Office to see President Joe Biden, the White House said, and hosted her for lunch. Among those invited to the women-only meal were Rep. Doris Matsui, D-Calif.; Maki Onuki, principal dancer at the Washington Ballet; and Akiko Iwasaki, immunology professor at Yale University School of Medicine, according to the first lady's office.

The new sapling is a Yoshino cherry tree that was propagated from a cutting from a cherry tree that was planted on the south grounds in July 2017, the White House said. It

was planted near the East Wing. The White House has 23 other cherry trees across the 18 acres.

The meeting between Biden and Kishida was rescheduled from January when Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and President Biden met in the Oval Office. Kishida's wife accompanied him on the trip. But Jill Biden was unable to host Yuko Kishida at the time because the first lady was recovering from a surgical procedure performed two days earlier to remove several cancerous lesions from her skin.

It also comes before next week's state visit by South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and first lady, Kim Keon Hee.

President Biden has looked to build closer security cooperation with Japan and

South Korea at a time of shared concerns about a restive North Korea and a more powerful China. He has sought opportunities to help the historic rivals improve their long, fraught relationship as the Indo-Pacific region becomes in-

creasingly complicated.

In March, South Korea announced a plan to compensate Koreans who performed forced labor during Tokyo's colonial rule that doesn't require Japanese companies to contribute to the reparations. □



First lady Jill Biden, right, and Yuko Kishida, spouse of Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, third from left, walk on the South Grounds of the White House in Washington to plant a Yoshino cherry tree, Monday, April 17, 2023.

Associated Press

Secret Chinese police station in New York leads to arrests

By **LARRY NEUMEISTER and ERIC TUCKER**

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Two men were arrested Monday on charges that they helped establish a secret police station in New York City on behalf of the Chinese government, and about three dozen officers with China's national police force were charged with using social media to harass dissidents inside the United States, authorities said Monday.

The cases, taken together, are part of a series of Justice Department prosecutions in recent years aimed at disrupting Chinese government efforts to locate in America pro-democracy activists and others who are openly critical of Beijing's policies and to suppress their speech.

One of three cases announced Monday concerns a local branch of the Chinese Ministry of Public Security that had operated inside an office building in Manhattan's Chinatown neighborhood before closing last fall amid an FBI investigation. The two men who were arrested were acting under the direction and control of a Chinese government official and deleted communication with that official from their



A six story glass facade building, center, is believed to be the site of a foreign police outpost for China in New York's Chinatown, Monday, April 17, 2023.

Associated Press

phones after learning of the FBI's probe, according to the Justice Department.

"This is a blatant violation of our national sovereignty," Michael Driscoll, the head of New York's FBI field office said at a news conference. The men, identified as "Harry" Lu Jianwang, 61, of the Bronx, and Chen Jinping, 59, of Manhattan, both U.S. citizens, were arrested at their homes on Monday morning. Attorney Deirdre Vondornum, representing Lu, declined to comment. An email message seeking comment was left with a lawyer for Chen.

At no point did the men register with the Justice Department as agents of a foreign government, U.S. law enforcement officials said. And though the secret police station did perform some basic services, such as helping Chinese citizens renew their Chinese driver's licenses, it also served a more "sinister" function, including helping the Chinese government locate a pro-democracy activist of Chinese descent living in California, officials said.

"New York City is home to New York's finest: the NYPD," U.S. Attorney Bre-

on Peace, the top federal prosecutor in Brooklyn, said at a news conference announcing the arrests. "We don't need or want a secret police station in our great city."

Justice Department officials in recent years have prioritized prosecutions of what's known as "transnational repression," in which foreign governments work to identify, intimidate and silence dissidents in the U.S. A signature case concerning China was announced in 2020, when the Justice Department charged more than a half-dozen people

with working on behalf of the Chinese government in a pressure campaign aimed at coercing a New Jersey man wanted by Beijing into returning to China to face charges. In January, the Justice Department charged three men in an alleged plot that originated in Iran to kill an Iranian American author and activist who has spoken out against human rights abuses there.

"In America, the law protects all of us equally from persecution, violence and threats of violence as authoritarian governments whether the PRC, Russia, Iran, or others become more brazen in their efforts to trample the rights and liberties that are the bedrock of our democracy," said David Newman, a top official in the Justice Department's national security division, using an acronym for the People's Republic of China.

In addition, prosecutors on Monday announced that eight Chinese government officials who are believed to be currently living in China were charged with directing an employee of a U.S. telecommunications company to remove Chinese dissidents from the company's platform. □

Printing error forces Pennsylvania county to replace ballots

By **MARK SCOLFORO**

Associated Press

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) — Elections officials in a central Pennsylvania county were scrambling on Monday to fix an error on more than 18,000 mail-in ballots for the spring primary, when voters will elect judges for the state Supreme Court and other positions.

Late last week someone noticed that the ballot for Superior Court instructed Republican and Democratic primary voters to pick only one judicial candidate to nominate from their party, when in fact voters could pick two, according to Lancaster County's elections board.

There are two vacancies to

fill on the mid-level appeals court.

By early Monday afternoon, postal officials had

helped Lancaster, which is about 71 miles (114 kilometers) west of Philadelphia, intercept and safely secure

over 15,000 of the affected ballots, officials said.

The problem comes as voters are just receiving mail-in ballots for the primary, which also includes a vacancy on the state Supreme Court.

Voters will receive replacements with corrected wording and a sheet of instructions. Those who received an erroneous ballot were told to throw it out and wait for a replacement. Ballots from those who fill out and return erroneous versions will be "set aside" by the elections board, the county said.

The deadline to return mail-in ballots is May 16.

Pennsylvania is a closely divided swing state that is

expected to be a major battleground in next year's presidential contest. Lancaster is a Republican-majority area with a large farm economy and a growing suburban population. More than 220,000 Lancaster residents voted in the November gubernatorial election. Lancaster County also had a printing problem with primary ballots a year ago, when a vendor mailed ballots with the wrong ID code, preventing scanning machines from reading them. About one-third of the 21,000-plus ballots affected last year were able to be properly scanned. The votes had to be painstakingly transferred to fresh ballots. □



Election workers perform a recount of ballots from the recent Pennsylvania primary election at the Allegheny County Election Division warehouse in Pittsburgh on June 1, 2022.

Associated Press

Dutch intel agency paints grim picture of multiple threats

By MIKE CORDER

Associated Press

ZOETERMEER, Netherlands (AP) —

The Dutch national intelligence agency painted a grim picture Monday of a growing number of internal and external threats to the rule of law in the Netherlands compounded by Russia's war in Ukraine, international cyberattacks and espionage.

In its annual report, the General Intelligence and Security Service called China "the biggest threat to the Netherlands' economic security."

The agency's director-general, Erik Akerboom, said that China is targeting the Netherlands as an innovative country that develops new technology.

"We see that every day they try to steal that from the Netherlands," he told The Associated Press.

"The Chinese use cyber as a weapon, cyber as a way to commit espionage, but they also send people to us students, but also scientific persons of all kind to especially steal knowledge from very vulnerable places," he said.

The Netherlands earlier this year announced plans to impose additional restrictions on the export of



Erik Akerboom, director-general of the Dutch General Intelligence and Security Service, AIVD, painted a grim picture during a press conference in Zoetermeer, Netherlands, Thursday, April 13, 2023, of a growing number of internal and external threats to the rule of law in the Netherlands compounded by Russia's war in Ukraine and international cyber attacks and espionage.

Associated Press

machines that make advanced processor chips. The Dutch joined a U.S. push that aims to limit China's access to materials used to make such chips, amid fears they could be used in weapons, to commit rights abuses or to improve the speed and accuracy of military logistics. China has criticized the moves as violations of market principles in inter-

national trade. Akerboom highlighted overlapping threats ranging from terrorism, extremism, cyberattacks, espionage, covert influence and sabotage, to organized crime undermining the rule of law.

The war that erupted when Russia invaded Ukraine last year exacerbated the situation. Sanctions on Russian energy imports led to a gas shortage, feeding into soar-

ing inflation. That in turn led to an uptick in conspiracy theories, among other threats.

"As a result, extremist boosters in the Netherlands were once again given the opportunity to spread conspiracy theories about an 'evil elite' after the corona crisis. Sometimes countries like Russia use the unrest in the West to secretly stir up contradictions in society,"

the report said. Russia also has long been actively trying to steal secrets from the Netherlands and other European and NATO allies, the agency said. The report highlighted the agency's involvement last year in the expulsion of 17 Russian diplomats from the Netherlands who were suspected of espionage, and the unmasking of a Russian agent who tried to infiltrate the Hague-based International Criminal Court.

The agency pointed to a massive cyberattack targeting NATO member Albania last year as an example of "the massive threat that now emanates from countries with cyberattack programs, such as China, Russia and Iran."

Albania cut diplomatic ties with Iran last year over a July 15 cyberattack that temporarily shut down numerous Albanian government digital services and websites. Tirana called the disruption an act of "state aggression."

The service also noted that "hatred, anti-Semitism and conspiracy theories spread in the Netherlands" and said it "prevented concrete threats within the Netherlands from becoming reality." □

Antisemitic incidents on rise across U.S., report finds

JERUSALEM (AP) — Antisemitism rose in the U.S. in 2022 and shows little sign of abating worldwide as political radicals have gained mainstream popularity, researchers said in a report released Monday.

The report was released by Tel Aviv University's Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry and the U.S.-based Anti-Defamation League as Israel began observing its annual day of remembrance for the 6 million Jews killed in the Holocaust.

Last year's report found that 2021 set a new high for antisemitic incidents, with the coronavirus pandemic fueling a worldwide rise in

antisemitism.

This year the researchers said that "2022 did not mark a universal reversal of the trend, and in some countries, most alarmingly the United States, it intensified."

Other countries with large Jewish populations, such as France, Canada, Argentina and the United Kingdom, showed a decrease in antisemitic incidents from the previous year.

The ADL found that the number of antisemitic incidents in the U.S. increased by more than 35% in the past year, from 2,721 in 2021 to 3,697 in 2022. Antisemitic and white supremacist propaganda in the

U.S. also hit new levels, the organization said.

Antisemitic hate crimes rose in New York, Los Angeles and Chicago, home to the country's three largest Jewish populations, according to their police departments.

The researchers found that visibly identifiable Jews, particularly ultra-Orthodox Jews, who are also known as haredi Jews, are the primary targets of antisemitic violence in the West.

"Haredi Jews are the main victims not only because they are easily identifiable as Jews, but also because they are perceived as vulnerable and unlikely to fight back," the report said.



A U.S. flag is seen through a hole torn in an Israel national flag, as they wave in the wind at a horse ranch, near the southern Israeli town of Sderot, Friday, Nov. 20, 2020.

Associated Press

The rise in Jew-hatred in the U.S. is not limited to white supremacists. It said that "the antisemitism of the far-right and far-left are pushing into the mainstream of American culture and politics from both sides."

While antisemitism in Amer-

ica is nothing new, since World War II, "American Jews have lived securely in the knowledge that civil society and its institutions are a reliable buffer against discrimination, prejudice and violence," the report's authors wrote. □

Italy pushes crackdown on migrants reaching its shores

By **FRANCES D'EMILIO**

Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Italy's right-wing government pressed ahead with plans to crack down on migrants as they arrived by the hundreds on Monday at a Sicilian port after a coast guard rescue. Dozens more were taken on board a charity boat from an unseaworthy vessel operated by smugglers, while others came ashore unaided.

This week, the Senate is due to take up proposed legislation put forward by the government of far-right Premier Giorgia Meloni that aims to make it harder for migrants to gain temporary permission to stay in Italy.

Coalition ally Matteo Salvini, who leads the anti-migrant League party, wants the country to eliminate a status known as "special protection" for many of the tens of thousands of migrants who have come ashore in Italy for years now aboard smugglers' boats launched from Libya, Tunisia, Turkey and other places.

That status allows migrants who are unlikely to win refugee status to stay in Italy for two years, pending renewal. During this time, they can work legally and rent housing.



Some 300 migrants are disembarked from the Italian coast guard ship Peluso in the Sicilian harbor of Catania, Italy, Monday, April 17, 2023.

Associated Press

Salvini claims the possibility of "special protection" acts as a "pull factor," in encouraging migrants to leave their homelands in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Many of the migrants are fleeing poverty or a lack of decent jobs in sub-Saharan Africa, northern Africa, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Egypt.

While Meloni has said she'd like to see that status elimi-

nated, lawmakers from another coalition party, Silvio Berlusconi's conservative Forza Italia, have indicated they could push for the time to be slashed from two years to six months.

"It's not so much a question of numbers, but of (sending) a signal of severity that we want to give," Maurizio Gasparri, a prominent Forza Italia senator was quoted as saying in Corriere della

Sera on Monday.

The number of migrants arriving this spring has risen relentlessly.

A Italian coast guard boat with about 200 migrants aboard pulled into the harbor of Catania, Sicily early Monday.

They were among some 600 migrants rescued by the coast guard during the weekend in Malta's search-and-rescue sector of the

Mediterranean.

For years, humanitarian groups have lamented that Maltese authorities often ignore distress calls from foundering migrant vessels. But on Monday, two humanitarian organizations, Alarm Phone, which monitors migrant boats in distress in the Mediterranean, and Emergency, which operates a rescue vessel, tweeted that Malta had instructed cargo ships to come to the aid of a couple of boats, and that the rescued passengers would disembark later in the archipelago nation.

On Sunday, Alarm Phone indicated there were a total of about 60 migrants on the two distressed boats.

The others arrived in Catania late Sunday night aboard a vessel operated by Frontex, the European Union's border protection agency.

Also on Sunday, an Italian naval vessel brought about 300 rescued migrants to another Sicilian port, Augusta, Italian media said.

Stepping ashore on the tiny island of Lampedusa were scores of other migrants who arrived unaided. Among them were several spotted walking on a beach by residents of the tiny tourist and fishing isle. □

Freak storm in Thailand capsizes fishing boats, killing 3

BANGKOK (AP) — A freak storm in southern Thailand capsized a dozen fishing boats and killed at least three people, but more than 100 others who were also at sea have been accounted for, officials said Monday.

Seven people were injured after the sudden storm off the coast of Nakhon Si Thammarat province on Sunday morning caused the fishing boats to capsize and damaged dozens of others in the Gulf of Thailand. There were no missing reported among the 149 people on 61 boats, the

provincial Public Relations Department reported.

One of the survivors, Somkid Maneewong, said his boat encountered a wave about 4 meters (13 feet) high about an hour after leaving shore.

He told TV Channel 3 that he and his 31-year-old son tried to swim to safety but strong currents eventually tired his son out and he died.

He said he was surprised by the winds and currents so strong he "could not control the boat."

The provincial disaster prevention agency pub-

lished an announcement warning small fishing boats against going to sea until Monday, but it was issued Sunday afternoon, after Somkid's and other boats had already encountered the storm.

The disaster agency said 10 provinces had been affected by the storm, including Nakhon Si Thammarat and Surat Thani in the south, where officials reported a large private ferry was damaged while docked Sunday after a strong wave sent it crashing into the pier. There were no casualties. □



In this photo released by the People Unity Foundation, rescuers from the charitable organization help a survivor from a boat that capsized off the coast of Nakhon Si Thammarat province, southern Thailand on April 16, 2023.

Associated Press

Minister Geoffrey Wever: Agri Business Academy was a complete success!

(Oranjestad)—After passing the first trajectory of the Agri Business Academy, a first group of future business people received their certificate in the presence of Minister Geoffrey Wever (Economic Affairs) and Minister Ursell Arends (Nature). The goal of the Agri Business Academy to help people set up their own businesses in agriculture or help those who want to further develop in the agricultural sector.

Businesses and business talent is essential for our economy to development and grow. The role of the government of Aruba in this process is to facilitate opportunities for each citizen so they can acquire knowledge and skills to run their own businesses. In this case, to run their own business in the agricultural sector, a sector that has a big potential for growth. As part of the approach to stimulate trade, the Agri Business Academy is a tool to help a future merchant grow and become successful. In this way, the government actively works with the private sector to diversify our economy, creating new spaces for work, profit for the government and make Aruba



less dependent on international trade and influence. "I'm very happy and proud to see that the Agri Business Academy culminated to 17 participants getting their certificate. When I became a minister, I was

approached with a proposition by Qredits to partner with the government so we can boost the agricultural sector from the business perspective. Along with Minister Arends, we came to an agreement to



organize the Agri Business Academy and offer this program to 60 people. This is a 12-week course on the business side of agriculture. I'm extremely happy to see this idea come to life. This way we show great collab-

oration between ministers and the private sector for the benefit of our residents. This course is an investment made by the government for our community. We try to bring important changes with the little funding we have."



Minister Wever wishes every participant all the best with their ambitions and business endeavors in the agricultural sector and gives thanks to Qredits Aruba for their cooperation with the government to facilitate opportunities like these to the public. This program will surely contribute greatly in stimulating trade and business talent in Aruba. Soon, a new group will be able to participate in this same program. □

Dutch photographer Nico van der Ven recognized for his work with Aruban and Antillean delegation

(Oranjestad)—Prime Minister Every Wever-Croes, Along with Minister Plenipotentiary Ady Thijsen received Mr. Nico van der Ven at Arubahuis in The Hague, The Netherlands, where he was officially given recognition for his work with different political leader in Aruba and around the Antilles.

Mr. van der Ven is a well-known photographer, who has always helped Aruban politicians in The Netherlands. He was fond memories from his many visits to the island as well. The prime

minister explained that she had known Mr. van der Ven since the beginning of her career in politics and that Mr. van der Ven has always been someone willing to help.

This week, they have invited the photographer to Arubahuis to give an official recognition as a thank you from Aruba and representatives from the island for the great work he has done with Aruba in The Netherlands.

In a conversation between the prime minister and the honoree, the latter shared some fond stories with Prime

Minister Wever-Croes. One of these stories that really captured her attention was when met her uncle and Aruban Hero, Mr. Betico Croes, in a dark and sad corner in The Hague. When he asked Betico what was wrong, he told the photographer that he misses his children. "That's something that you sympathize with for sure, especially given the long period of time he had been away from his family," the prime minister expressed.

As part of the official recognition, the prime minister gifted Mr. Nico van der

Ven a coin for the hand he always held out for the

islands in the Dutch kingdom. □



Another Treasure of Aruba's Beaches: Sea Glass!



NOORD - It is hard to imagine this happening today, but years ago people dumped all kinds of refuse straight into the ocean, including old cars, and their household garbage, which of course included lots of glass. Over the next 30 years the pounding waves cleaned the beach, by breaking down everything but glass and pottery. The pounding waves washed the trash up and down, back and forth. Tons of polished, broken glass pieces were created by the pounding surf. These smoothened, colored glass particles then settled along the sea shore in millions, and that is why you can find these beautiful and colorful pieces on the north shore beaches of Aruba.

Especially on the strip on white sand between the famous Natural Bridge" and the huge red anchor close to "Grapefield" beach you will be able to find your own pieces of sea glass. The sea glass that was created is the product of a very long and interesting process. It can take anywhere from 10 to 30 years to make sea glass. The name for any piece of glass that finds its way to the ocean and tumbles around in the water long enough is "Sea glass."

The colorful pieces of glass are being used for decoration, handicrafts and jewelry! Once glass makes its way into the ocean, the glass is broken up into shards and is tumbled around in the water, where sand and other

rocks act like sandpaper to smooth out its rough edges. Sometimes as the sea glass is passed through fire, it becomes fire glass, the rarest of sea glass with certain inclusions, just like precious gems.

For years, the water beat against the different kinds of trash being dumped. Glass, household appliances and even motor parts were discarded on the beach. The waves and weather conditions wore down the overwhelming amount of garbage in the water, creating millions of beautiful smooth rocks.

It's hard to believe the short-sighted mistakes we were making that could have potentially ruined these beautiful beaches. But thanks to natural processes, the ocean transformed the trash into the sea glass.

Each colored gem on the beach has its own story.

The ruby red glass stones are typically from old car tail-lights.

Then, the sapphire rocks are the remnants of broken apothecary bottles. The most common and the easiest to find are the brown (Amstel & Polar



beer), green (Heineken & Balashi beer) and clear glass which are the soft much loved "soft drink" bottles.

If you like to see the sea glass for yourself, and be in awe of the power of nature, rent a car or jeep and go explore our deserted beaches on the north side of the island. Make it a fun family day! Even if we didn't mean to pollute the Beaches how we did, it is inspiring to see just how the earth can correct our mistakes.

Funny, how trash can change into treasures!

Everybody knows that you are not allowed to take local shells home, but the people working at the airport have no problem you taking sea glass home. A few of those pieces make great souvenirs. You can place them in a wine glass or large bottle for decoration and every time you look at it a smile will light up your face thinking back of your unforgettable Aruba vacation! □

Parenthood Plan project congress initiated

ORANJESTAD - The Minister of Justice and Social Affairs, Mr. Rocco Tjon, recently opened a congress regarding the "Parenthood Plan" project.

During this congress, various experts in the social field shared information

about the essential aspects for parents and children when dealing with divorce. It is in connection with the Continued Parenthood law, which Parliament will probably discuss this year. During the seminar's week, the professionals in this field will attend various other sig-

nificant courses. They ensured that 46 teachers received the training as KIES (Children in Divorce Situations) coaches, which consisted of two groups, one for children between the ages 6-12 and one for the group ages 13-18. Additionally, 13 professionals received training in family mediation.

The reason for launching the Planned Parenting project is the introduction of the "Law for the Promotion of Continued Parenthood and Careful Divorces on Aruba. Part of this law is to reach agreements for, among others, the care and man-



agement of the "parenting plans." The foundation of this law focuses on the importance of education and the formation of our professionals.

The Parenthood plan project is possible thanks to the cooperation and dedication of the members of the planned parenting committee Mrs. Michella Steenvoorde -Lacé, Mr.

Bert Wielenga, Mrs. Aisca Berkemeyer, Mrs. Sacha Geerman, Mrs. Yvonne Bermudes, Mrs. Magaly Maduro, Mrs. Sylvie Eman, Mr. Luc Alofs and Mrs. Desiree Helder.

Minister Tjon is grateful to the planned parenting committee's professionals and the Minister of Justice and Safety in the Netherlands, Mrs. Dilan Yeşilgöz-Zegerius, for her collaboration. □



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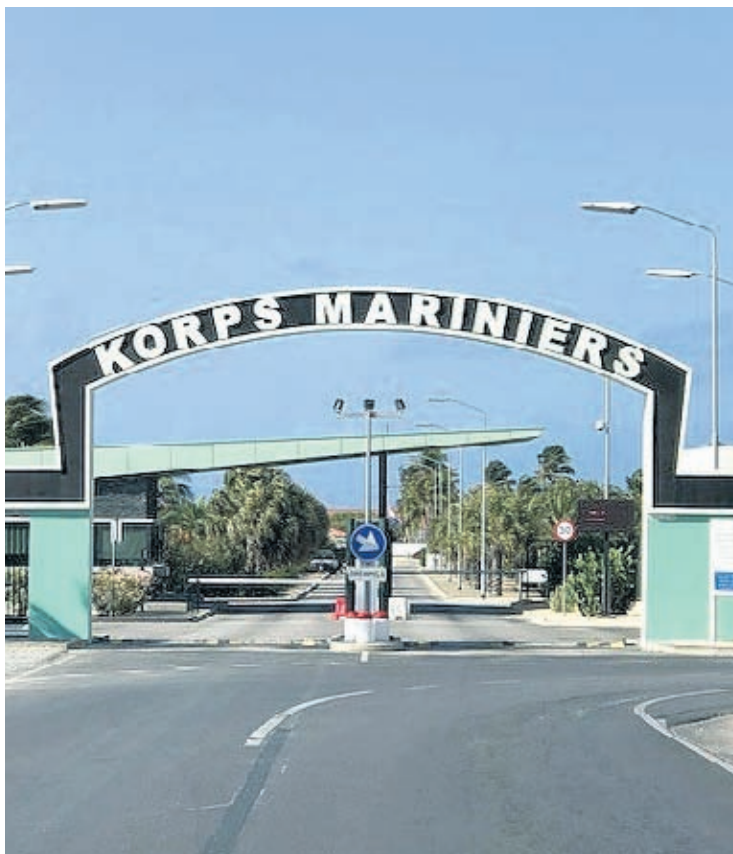
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Announcement of Open Day at Aruba's Marine Barracks in Savaneta



The Marine Barracks in Savaneta will once again open their doors for the public on May 1st 2023. After four years there was no possibility for an Open Day; finally it has come so far again. Everybody is most welcome to have a look from 10:00 o'clock till 16:00 o'clock at the Royal Navy.

Also our Security Partners, such as the Coastguard Dutch Caribbean Region, Police Force Aruba, Fire Department and the Department for Disaster Relief (Bureau Rampenbestrijding) Aruba, will be present during the whole day.

During the Open Day there you can see several demonstrations from the Royal Navy, as well as from the Security Partners. Visitors can grab a bite to eat at the food courts and browse the various market stalls. There is also a Superlottery with great prizes. Proceeds from the tickets sold will go to two charities: "Trampolin pa Trabao" & the Foundation "Stichting Muchila Creative". Radio stations CoolFM & FreshFM will provide for live music on site during the Open Day.

Follow the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Opendagmarinierskazerne> to be abreast of the news around the Open Day. Register for the event on Facebook [<https://fb.me/e/4IU0Dh9Em>] and receive the latest news immediately. □



beauty & THE BEACH

Aruba Today is delighted to share to its readers a new segment called "Beauty and the Beach", where we take a minute to honor our guests who have decided to spend their vacation on our beautiful and warm island.

In this edition, we'd like to give a shout out to **the Gallagher family from Pennsylvania, U.S.A.** Aruba is always proud to host all families and guests. We at Aruba Today encourage any visitor of the island to send in their pictures and/or messages; who knows? You might get on the cover!

This segment is sponsored by Alhambra Casino and Shops.

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Can I have a ...,please?



ORANJESTAD — Want to taste something different for a change?? How about a different breakfast from what you are used to at your hotel. Hop in your car, drive around and anywhere around the island you will come across a local snack shop.

Here you will find all types of snacks loved by the locals. Try a pastechi, a Caribbean pastry filled with cheese or meat and fried up deliciously. Or perhaps you might want to try a croquette, a crusty little meat ball. A dedito is also a good option, it's a stick made out of cheese or hotdog. If you want to try something more familiar go for a homemade hamburger or a ham and cheese toast, but with a local touch. All these snacks are ridiculously addictive. Freshen up with a delicious fruit shake (batido) made out of watermelon, strawberry, banana, papaya or just mix any fruit together. What makes these little snack shops more attractive is the warmth of its people and with the smile you are being served. □

Aruba Tourism Authority honored a loyal visitor at Casa Del Mar Beach Resort

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure to recognize a Distinguished Visitor of Aruba. This visitor was respectfully honored with a certificate acknowledging his years of visits, loyalty, and love to the island of Aruba.

The honor certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests whom have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three honoring levels are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)	Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)	Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
---	---	--

The honoree was: Distinguished Visitor of Aruba **Tyler Braden from Wisconsin, United States.** Young boy Tyler has been visiting the island with his family since he was only 6 weeks old, and today we mark his 10th consecutive visit to Aruba!



It is extremely pleasant to witness how families all gather together and bring their kids, and in some cases, grandchildren along so they can see why their families fell in love with Aruba in the first place and still yearn to visit the island after all these years.

Ms. Kimberley Richardson representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of the Casa Del Mar Beach Resort bestowed the Distinguished Visitor Certification to the honoree, presented him

with gifts, and also expressed gratitude to his family for bringing young Tyler along with them to Aruba since he was a baby for so many consecutive years.

Top reasons for returning to Aruba, provided by Tyler were:

Ocean & sunshine
The iguanas all around the Casa Del Mar Beach Resort
The delicious mudslides
Family fun
Being able to build sand-castles on the beach. □

Aruba Tourism Authority honor loyal visitors at the Marriott's Aruba Surf Club

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure to recognize Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. These Ambassadors were respectfully honored with certificates acknowledging their years of visits, loyalty, and love to the island of Aruba.

The honor certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests whom have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three honoring levels are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)	Goodwill Ambassador
---	---------------------



(20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)	Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
---	--

The honorees were: Goodwill Ambassadors **Mrs. Jessie Baginski from Ohio, United States.** Mrs. Baginski has

been coming to the island for 20 years consecutively. **Mr. Dennis & Mrs. Caroline Kelly from Maryland, United States.** Mr. & Mrs. Kelly have been coming to the island for 30 years consecutively. Ms. Kimberley Richardson representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and

members of the Marriott's Aruba Surf Club bestowed the Ambassador certification to the honorees, presented them with gifts, and also thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination and as their home-away-from-home.

Top reasons for returning to Aruba, provided by Mrs. Baginski were: Aruba's nice sandy beaches – Love Boca Catalina Beach
The Marriott and adjacent properties – Easy to walk along the beaches
Aruba's safety – Drinking water, beach access, and walkways
Adventure
Great food & entertainment

Top reasons for returning to Aruba, provided by Mr. & Mrs. Kelly were:

Aruba's year-round sunny weather
Aruba's delicious variety of foods
Aruba's warm & friendly people
Aruba's nice sandy beaches and picturesque sunsets
Aruba's cleanliness □

Sea turtle conservation by Turtugaruba Foundation

ORANJESTAD — Turtugaruba was founded on September 3rd, 2003, by a group of enthusiastic volunteers. Ten years earlier in 1993, a Sea Turtle Recovery Action Plan (STRAP) was introduced in Aruba and the rest of the Caribbean as an initiative of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). Tom Barmes, who was working at DLVV (Department of Agriculture, Husbandry and Fishery) was one of the writers of the STRAP for Aruba, together with Karen Eckert, director of WIDECAST (Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network). This is how sea turtle conservation started on the island following a plan that is still complied with today.

Tom formed a group of volunteers around him like an organization such as DLVV, because nature does not know office hours. This group of volunteers used the name Widecast Aruba and today there are still a few of them active. They first started protecting the Leatherback Sea Turtle nests on Palm Beach and Eagle Beach. This group also investigated which other species of sea turtles use Aruba as their nesting habitat and which beaches are used by them. For a period of 25 years, a study has been conducted in which investigators monitored the beaches every morning to study turtle movement. Now, there is a good overview of sea turtle nesting activities.

There are 4 different species of sea turtle that visit Aruba to lay their eggs, each with their own specific season:

- Leatherback Sea Turtle - Lederschildpad - Driekiel (March – September)
- Loggerhead Sea Turtle - Dikkopschildpad - Cawama (May – September)
- Hawksbill Sea Turtle - Karetschildpad - Caret (June – December)
- Green Turtle - Soepschildpad - Turtuga Blanco (July-November)



Investigators also reached a better understanding and overview of the biggest threats to the sea turtles' existence in Aruba and how these problems should be tackled. Despite the hard work all those years, most problems have not really gone away. Luckily—and thanks to the enormous efforts from the volunteers, the sea turtles are still here. On Aruba, the sea turtles are threatened with extinction by pollution, people driving ATVs on dunes and beaches and the loss of nesting beaches due to coastal development for tourism. Because coastal development comes with artificial lighting, these can cause major issues for sea turtles. Female turtles usually come ashore at night looking for a dark beach to make her nest. However, a dark beach is hard to find here nowadays. Light

causes stress and can result in her returning to the sea without laying her eggs. Furthermore, artificial lighting causes disorientation for the baby sea turtles (hatchlings).

They crawl towards artificial light sources (like streetlights, hotel lights, etc.) and end up walking in the opposite direction towards the hotels and away from the sea. In the 90's, it was a common occurrence to find complete nests of about 70 hatchlings dead on the street due to being run over by passing cars. Thanks to their protection methods and a lot of time and effort, the volunteers of Turtugaruba have managed to get this under control. However, for long-term prevention, there must be less light visible on the beaches and a strict regulation of it. Sea turtles simply need dark nesting beaches for their survival. It is clear that even more coastal development would not make the situation better for the sea turtles. Do we need more hotel rooms? And even busier beaches? These are the choices that Aruba has to make. Do we want to leave a place for the sea turtles? Not only do we need sea turtles, but so does the rest of the world! Sea turtles play a vital role in keeping our oceans healthy. The Green Turtle, for example, keeps the sea grasses on the bottom of the sea short and therefore a healthy place for many fish to deposit their eggs. The Leatherback, the largest turtle of the world, eats mainly jellyfish and helps maintain the balance between jellyfish and plankton.

Despite the threats that exist on Aruba, the turtles still keep coming. That's why today Turtugaruba is especially proud of the volunteers and the many people and organizations of our community that carry a warm place in their hearts for the sea turtles. All four species are active now, which means all hands on deck in the field for us, the volunteers. We strive to keep the sea turtles, our oldest 'repeat guests', always coming back to Aruba and get the chance to reproduce here. □



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

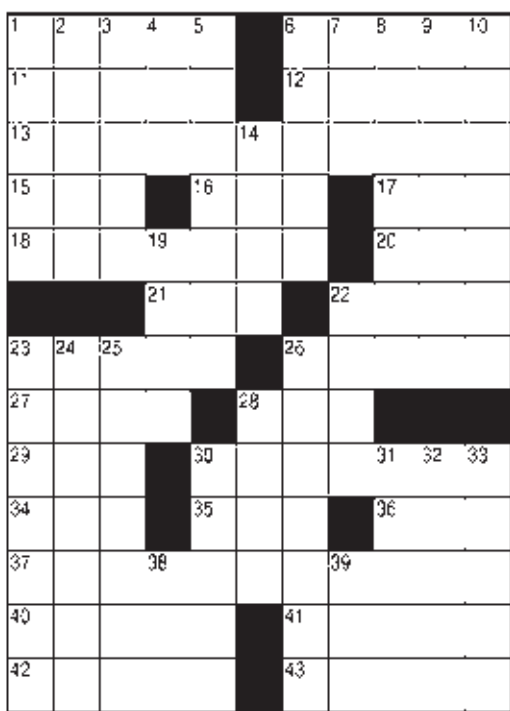
- 1 Forgoes contract food
- 6 Christmas song
- 11 Improvised
- 12 Supreme Court justice Kagan
- 13 National park in California
- 15 Shade tree
- 16 "My country — of thee"
- 17 Pub pint
- 18 Decree before-hand
- 20 Road sealer
- 21 Blackjack card
- 22 Painter Magritte
- 23 Edge
- 26 Pondered
- 27 Eye part
- 28 Mass of gum
- 29 Frequently, in poems
- 30 Response delay
- 34 "My word!"
- 35 Belief, in brief
- 36 Smelter supply
- 37 National park in Arizona
- 40 Spine-tingling

DOWN

- 1 Like old photos
- 2 "Hello" singer
- 3 Pillow covers
- 4 Youngster
- 5 Show biz routine
- 6 Halt
- 7 The whole shebang
- 8 Feels empathy
- 9 Like some rural bridges
- 10 Like skiers' clothing
- 14 Arbor climber
- 19 Earth tones
- 22 Ill-mannered
- 23 Online journal writer
- 24 Game official
- 25 Dis-traught
- 26 Platypi and pandas
- 28 Minn. neighbor
- 30 Sea motions
- 31 Faithful
- 32 Stood
- 33 Trait carriers
- 38 Tiny complaint
- 39 "The Matrix" hero



Yesterday's answer



4-18

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

4-18

CRYPTOQUOTE

FQWLW SLW UWSLP FQSF

SPH BAWPENGTP STE UWSLP

FQSF STPCWL — JGLS TWSXW

QALPFGT

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: WHEN SPRING CAME, EVEN THE FALSE SPRING, THERE WERE NO PROBLEMS EXCEPT WHERE TO BE HAPPIEST. — ERNEST HEMINGWAY

Liz Weston: Retiring? If you need a home loan, get one first

By LIZ WESTON
of NerdWallet

Retired engineers Kelly and Derek Barkey assumed they would be approved when they applied for a \$50,000 home equity line of credit two years ago to fix up their new house.

The Barkeys, now 56 and 59, had just sold their long-time home in Southern California and paid cash for a house worth about \$850,000 near St. Louis, Missouri. They had retirement accounts worth \$3 million, \$500,000 in a taxable brokerage account and excellent credit scores.

They were surprised when a national bank turned them down. They tried a local credit union, which also rejected them.

"We haven't been turned down for credit since about 1987," says Kelly Barkey, remembering when the couple applied for a rewards credit card while she was still a college student.

HOME LOANS CAN BE HARDER TO GET IN RETIREMENT

The federal Equal Credit Opportunity Act prohibits lenders from discriminating against applicants based on age, but that doesn't mean getting a home loan in retirement will be easy even for those with good credit, little debt and plenty of savings, financial planners say.

The issue is often proving that you have enough steady income to repay the loan, says Lori Trawinski, director of finance and employment for AARP Public Policy Institute.

Working people can use



This undated file photo provided by NerdWallet shows Liz Weston, a columnist for personal finance website NerdWallet.com.

Associated Press

W-2 forms and pay stubs to prove they have sufficient income. Lenders can verify incomes through IRS transcripts, by calling an employer or using massive paycheck databases such as The Work Number. Lenders typically want to see two years' worth of steady income, but working borrowers aren't required to prove that their incomes will continue at the same rate. The rules are more complicated for retirees, Trawinski says. In addition to proving they have enough income to pay the loan, retired people often must prove that the money will continue for at least three years, she says.

HOW MORTGAGE LENDERS VIEW RETIREMENT INCOME

The Barkeys say they draw about \$35,000 a year from their taxable brokerage account, and Derek Barkey earns another \$35,000 by consulting more than enough to support the payments on a \$50,000 home equity line. □

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Cedric the Entertainer enjoying life in his 'Neighborhood'

By GARY G. HAMILTON

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — "The Neighborhood" might be a hit sitcom now, but needed some careful planning before laying down a solid foundation. "We shot the pilot twice. We had to recast. And so, there was moments where you didn't think the show was going to go," said Cedric the Entertainer. "But the elements of it, the idea that it was about gentrification, the idea that it was about a Black family kind of staying true to their neighborhood when they saw white families moving in ... I think it just caught legs and really resonated with people because we do it in, of course, a sitcom, lighthearted way." "The Neighborhood," now in its fifth season on CBS, follows the Butlers, a Black family led by Calvin (Cedric) and Tina (Tichina Arnold) as they coexist with their white neighbors, Dave (Max Greenfield) and Gemma Johnson (Beth Behrs), who moved from the Midwest to a predominately Black neighborhood in Pasadena, California. The show celebrated its 100th episode this week. While not every episode deals with heavy topics, the show has unpacked topics like Black Lives Matter and so-



Cedric the Entertainer poses for a portrait on Wednesday, April 5, 2023, in New York.

Associated Press

cial justice, pregnancy loss and white privilege. But as more issues emerge like attempts to ban books and critical race theory, Cedric believes his show is more than capable of exploring them. "One of the great testaments to the show is that we try not to preach it, but we also aren't afraid to kind of just dive in," said the former Emmys host. "We try to ... deal with all those kind of subject matters on our show without just saying, 'Hey, this is the line and this is what we believe in.'"

We just raise a question." The milestone episode was directed by Cedric, who also serves as an executive producer. He said sitting in the big chair has been the next progression of his show responsibilities. "It was only natural for me to kind of really morph into directing because I can see the show; when I'm reading the scripts, I kind of know where people are going to be. And so, that was something that I've been wanting to grow into," explained the funnyman, who also direct-

ed an episode last season. The St. Louis-area native began his career in stand-up comedy, although later than most; after graduating from Southeast Missouri State University, he worked for State Farm before diving into professional comedy in his mid-20s. After making a name for himself locally, he eventually secured hosting stints for HBO's legendary "Def Comedy Jam" as well BET's popular "ComicView." While his sitcom star is brighter than ever, it's a culmination of years

of experience; he starred in "The Soul Man" which ran from 2012 to 2016, but for many, his role as the loveable sidekick, Cedric Jackie Robinson on the '90s sitcom, "The Steve Harvey Show," won the hearts of viewers. "I really believe that that's kind of led to my longevity: that idea of watching Steve, being right there close (to him)," Cedric said of his good friend and "Kings of Comedy" brother. "The way he hired, the way he got Black people on the show, how he was able to negotiate his deals all these things were things that I was exposed to just by being the No. 2 guy in the right situation."

It was an especially huge payoff because at the time, Cedric had a deal in place to lead his own show. But after seeing Harvey's early sitcom, "The Boys," last only one season, he chose learn and observe, rather than jumping into leading a show head-first. "It's hard to knock that down when someone is kind of saying, 'Hey, you're the man!' ... I kind of saw him fail once. And I was like, I don't want to run out there and get one season," said the "Barbershop" star. "I kind of felt like that was the right thing for me to do, and it worked out great." □

Malala Yousafzai working on new book, her 'most personal'

NEW YORK (AP) — Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai is working on a new memoir, the latest book by the young activist from Pakistan known for her advocacy for education for girls and for surviving an assassination attempt by the Taliban when she was in her teens.

Atria Books, an imprint of Simon & Schuster, announced the memoir Monday. It is currently untitled and has no scheduled release date.

Yousafzai's previous works include the million-selling "I Am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban," published

in 2013, the year before she won the Nobel Peace Prize at age 17. She has since graduated

from Oxford University and married Asser Malik, a manager with the Pakistan Cricket Board.



Malala Yousafzai arrives at HISTORYTalks on Sept. 24, 2022, at DAR Constitution Hall in Washington.

Associated Press

Her production company, Extracurricular, has a deal with Apple TV+ for a wide range of film and television projects.

"The last few years of my life have been marked by extraordinary transformation, and all the anguish and joy that accompanies growth," Yousafzai, 25, said in a statement released by Atria.

"This is my most personal book yet and I hope that readers will find recognition, reassurance, and insight in my story."

Atria is calling the new book a "breathtaking story of recovery and search for identity, a candid exploration of her coming-of-age

in the public spotlight, and an intimate look at her life today."

Young readers and picture book editions are also planned.

Yousafzai was targeted by the Taliban for her relentless objections to the group's regressive interpretation of Islam that limits girls' access to education. She was shot while returning home from school in Pakistan's Swat Valley in 2012.

The TTP, or Pakistani Taliban, is separate from but a close ally of the Afghan Taliban, and that group's takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021 emboldened the TTP, which shares the group's ideology. □

Injuries to NBA stars Giannis, Ja dim start of postseason

By **TERESA M. WALKER**

AP Sports Writer

Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer expressed cautious optimism regarding the status of Giannis Antetokounmpo after the two-time MVP left Milwaukee's Eastern Conference playoff opener with a bruised lower back.

Antetokounmpo isn't the only prominent player already dealing with a health issue after the first weekend of the playoffs. Injuries to some of the NBA's top stars have dimmed the start of the postseason, with title hopes possibly fading just as quickly depending on how bad they're hurt.

Budenholzer said Monday that Antetokounmpo underwent an MRI after the game that revealed "everything's clean." The Bucks lost 130-117 to the Miami Heat on Sunday and trail the best-of-7 series 1-0 heading into Game 2 on Wednesday night.

"I would say he's still sore, but I think progress," Budenholzer said. "He's getting some treatment. I think we'll just continue to monitor him for the next day or two. We're probably fortunate that (we have) two days between games. I think (we're) still mostly positive, mostly optimistic, but we'll see how he feels over the next day or two."



Milwaukee Bucks' Giannis Antetokounmpo lays on the ground after an injury during the first half in Game 1 of an NBA basketball first-round playoff game Sunday, April 16, 2023, in Milwaukee.

Associated Press

Injuries over the span of a couple hours Sunday also sidelined two-time All-Star Ja Morant of the Memphis Grizzlies and the Miami Heat's Tyler Herro, keeping them from finishing their playoff openers.

Anthony Davis scared Los Angeles Lakers fans by grabbing at his right shoulder and saying he couldn't move his arm. Luckily for the Lakers, Davis rebounded from a stinger and returned for the start of the third quarter of their 128-112 victory over the Grizzlies.

Both Antetokounmpo and

Morant were hurt on drives to the basket where each landed awkwardly.

Antetokounmpo came down hard on his backside after being fouled by Miami's Kevin Love. The Bucks' forward got up slowly with 4:13 left in the first quarter. He picked up his second foul about 2 1/2 minutes later but played about 11 minutes for the Eastern Conference's No. 1 seed.

The Bucks went on to lose 130-117 to Miami. Herro broke his right hand late in the second quarter, ap-

parently while diving for a loose ball. The Heat disclosed the severity of his injury at halftime.

Miami coach Erik Spoelstra said Herro, seen with a cast on his hand after the game, won't play Game 2 on Wednesday night and the Heat will figure out what to do next.

"I got the same diagnosis that you all heard," Spoelstra said.

Morant came into Sunday's first-round Western Conference series with his right hand already bandaged after being hurt in a

win that clinched the No. 2 seed for the Grizzlies.

Then he drove to the basket against the 6-foot-10 Davis with 5:48 left, with Memphis trailing the Lakers 105-101. His right hand appeared to bend the wrong direction as he hit the court. Morant writhed in pain, then ran toward the Grizzlies' bench letting out a yell near mid-court before sprinting to the locker room.

Memphis coach Taylor Jenkins said X-rays were negative and the Grizzlies will do further testing taking this injury one day at a time.

"I'm not the medical expert," Jenkins said.

Morant said he's doubtful for Game 2 on Wednesday night with Memphis down 0-1 following a 128-112 loss.

"Tough man, especially with everything I've been through pretty much this season," said Morant, who was suspended by the NBA for eight games in March after livestreaming himself holding a gun at a Denver-area strip club.

The guard who set the Grizzlies' single season scoring record averaging 26.2 points a game wants to play.

Memphis already is without center Steven Adams because of an injured knee and reserve big man Brandon Clarke tore an Achilles tendon in March. □

AP source: Twins, Pablo López add \$73.5M for 4 years

By **DAVE CAMPBELL**

AP Sports Writer

The Minnesota Twins and starting pitcher Pablo López agreed Monday on a contract that adds \$73.5 million over four seasons, according to a person with direct knowledge of the deal.

The person confirmed the agreement to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the contract was still pending completion of a physical exam and had not yet been announced by the club.

López's first season with the Twins has started splendidly after he arrived in a trade with Miami that sent 2022 American League batting champion and fan favorite Luis Arraez to the Marlins. The right-hander has a 1.73 ERA through four starts with 33 strikeouts in 26 innings and only 15 hits allowed.

López was the hard-luck loser Sunday in New York, when Yankees ace Gerrit Cole pitched a two-hit shutout to beat the Twins 2-0. That was the second complete game in the major leagues this year.

The first one also came at López's expense, when 2022 National League Cy Young Award winner Sandy Alcantara pitched a three-hit shutout April 4 to beat the Twins 3-0.

López is making \$5.45 million this season, his second year of arbitration eligibility. The new deal will give the Twins some additional long-term stability around a rotation that has emerged in 2023 as a clear strength of the team. The Twins entered their day off Monday with a 2.58 starting pitcher ERA that was the best in the



Minnesota Twins starting pitcher Pablo Lopez (49) throws in the first inning of a baseball game against the New York Yankees, Sunday, April 16, 2023, in New York.

Associated Press

major leagues.

Sonny Gray, Kenta Maeda and Tyler Mahle are all in the final year of their contracts, eligible to become free agents in the fall. Their

uncertain status for next season only underscored the team's interest in committing to López, who posted a 3.94 ERA over 94 starts with the Marlins. □

Boston Marathon sweep for Kenya, but not favorite Kipchoge

By JIMMY GOLEN

AP Sports Writer

BOSTON (AP) — Defending champion Evans Chebet won the Boston Marathon again on Monday, surging to the front at Heartbreak Hill to spoil the much-anticipated debut of world record holder Eliud Kipchoge and win in 2 hours, 5 minutes, 54 seconds.

Hellen Obiri, a two-time Olympic silver medalist in the 5,000 meters, won the women's race in 2:21:38 to complete the Kenyan sweep. Amane Beriso of Ethiopia was second, 12 seconds back, followed seven seconds later by Israeli Lonah Salpeter.

Kipchoge finished sixth just his third loss ever in a major marathon to go with 12 victories. Scott Fauble was the top American, finishing seventh. Chebet is the first back-to-back winner since Robert Kipkoech Cheruiyot won three in a row from 2006-08.

"In a marathon anything can happen," Obiri said of the men's race. "It was a strong field, and everybody was there to race."

Chebet was in a lead pack that dropped Kipchoge around Mile 20, shortly after he missed his bottle at a water station. A threesome pulled away with about three miles left, with Gabriel



Evans Chebet, left, and Hellen Obiri, both of Kenya, pose on the finish line after winning the men's and women's division of the Boston Marathon, Monday, April 17, 2023, in Boston.

Associated Press

Geay of Tanzania winning a footrace for second, 10 seconds behind the winner and two seconds ahead of 2021 winner Benson Kipruto of Kenya.

"Most of them blew up. Even Eliud Kipchoge blew up," Fauble said. "I almost caught him."

Marcel Hug of Switzerland won the men's wheelchair race in a course record time — his sixth victory here and American Susannah Scaroni won her first Boston title despite having to stop early to tighten a wheel that began to wobble on

the bumpy pavement.

"It's better to pull over losing that time tightening it," she said. "The speed you lose when your wheel is (loose) is much greater than the time you would lose by not tightening it. I was disappointed. I just tried to get back to the ... pace as quickly as I could." For the first time, the race also includes a nonbinary division, with 27 athletes registered.

Kipchoge had been hoping to add a Boston Marathon victory to his unprecedented running resume.

The 38-year-old has won two Olympic gold medals and four of the six major marathons; Boston is the only one he has competed in and failed to win. (He has never run New York.) He also broke 2 hours in an exhibition in a Vienna park. Fighting a trace of a headwind and rain that dampened the roads, Kipchoge ran in the lead pack from the start in Hopkinton until the series of climbs collectively known as Heartbreak Hill.

But to the surprise of the fans lined up along Boylston

Street for the final sprint, he wasn't among the three leaders.

A dozen former champions and participants from 120 countries and all 50 states were in the field of 30,000 running 10 years after the finish line bombing that killed three people and wounded hundreds more. The race also included 264 members of the One Fund community those injured by the attack, their friends and family and charities associated with them.

The city marked the anniversary in a ceremony on Saturday.

A robotic dog named Stompy belonging to the Department of Homeland Security patrolled the start line before the race began, trailed by photographers capturing the peculiar sight. Officials said there were no known threats.

At 6 a.m., race director Dave McGillivray sent out a group of about 20 from the Massachusetts National Guard that hikes the course annually. Capt. Kanwar Singh, 33, of Malden, Massachusetts, said it's a special day.

"Ten years ago, the city came to a halt. It's an incredibly strong comeback, as a group together," he said. "I tell people, never bet against Bostonians." □

AP source: Hurts, Eagles agree to \$255 million extension

By DAN GELSTON

AP Sports Writer

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Jalen

Hurts is set to sign one of the richest deals in NFL history, agreeing to a five-year,

\$255 million extension with the Philadelphia Eagles, including \$179.3 million guaranteed, a person with knowledge of the situation told The Associated Press. The Eagles announced on Monday "QB1 is here to stay," but terms were not yet announced, according to the person who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because the deal was not yet final. Hurts was rewarded for his breakout season when he was named an AP NFL MVP finalist and led the Eagles to the Super Bowl, where they lost to the Kansas City Chiefs.

"Keeping the main thing in Philly," the Eagles tweeted. "We've agreed to terms

with Jalen Hurts on a 5-year extension through the 2028 season."

The 24-year-old Hurts was expected to receive \$51 million per season, and only Deshaun Watson (\$230M) and Kyler Murray (\$189.5M) received more in a single contract.

Hurts delivered a record performance in the Super Bowl, throwing for 304 yards and a touchdown, running for 70 yards and three scores and adding a game-tying 2-point conversion.

Philadelphia went 14-1 in his starts and he had 3,701 yards passing, 760 yards rushing and 35 touchdowns combined in the regular season. He led the Eagles

under coach Nick Sirianni to the top seed in the NFC and a playoff victory over the New York Giants and over the San Francisco 49ers in the NFC championship game.

The Eagles went 0-2 when Hurts sat out two late-season games because of a sprained right shoulder.

The Eagles stunned their fans when they drafted Hurts out of Oklahoma in the second round in 2020. They seemingly had Carson Wentz entrenched at QB and had more pressing needs. Hurts was expected to serve as insurance for Wentz. Instead, he supplanted him and became one of the top young quarterbacks in the NFL. □



Philadelphia Eagles quarterback Jalen Hurts celebrates a touchdown run by Kenneth Gainwell during the first half of the team's NFL football game against the Green Bay Packers on Nov. 27, 2022, in Philadelphia.

Associated Press